then the things that I then scorned, as I approached closer to them, appeared to me more attractive and more beautiful. And it is for them that, seduced, I now launch out into travel.

*Montpellier, 10 October*

Christianity, above all, consoles; but there are naturally happy souls who do not need consolation. Consequently Christianity begins by making such souls unhappy, for otherwise it would have no power over them.

Whereupon, ceasing to call my desires temptations, ceasing to resist them, I strove on the contrary to follow them. Pride seemed to me a less desirable thing. In that splendid egoism full of religion, I now saw, perhaps wrongly, only restrictions and limitations. Self-abandon struck me as a superior wisdom; it seemed to me that I would find in it greater profit for my soul. This was, I am well aware, still a form of egoism, but a newer, more curious form and one that satisfied in me more potential powers, I maintain that expression: satisfy potential powers; this had now become my rule of conduct; I wanted to live powerfully. O beauty! O desires! How skillfully you distracted my soul! That was the time when every smile diverted it; I used to smile myself and was never serious; I abhorred sorrow and protested against my inclinations toward sympathy. What more need I say? What I had begun with effort a charm or habit made me continue without restraint. Yet the habit of asceticism was such that in the beginning I had to force myself toward joy and it was with difficulty that I smiled; but how short a time those efforts lasted! Was I not following, meanwhile, perfectly natural laws? This occurred to me from the fact that, to live happily, I had perhaps

only to let myself go. I say ''perhaps" because I am not quite sure; yet I had the naivete to be amazed at first; wasn't this exactly what I had wanted: simply to let myself go? . . . I was like a sailor who drops his oars and lets himself drift; at last he takes the time to look at the shores; while he was rowing he saw nothing. My will, so constantly stretched taut, relaxed at present without any function. At first I experienced a mild discomfort; then even that disappeared, melting into the infinite charm of living, and of living carelessly. This was the great rest after the long fever; my former anxieties became incomprehensible to me. I was amazed that nature was so beautiful, and I called everything nature.

A ride to the pass of Anterne. The head of the gray horse grazing the meadow scabious.

Emerson, to be read only in the morning.